

## Message Text

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ACTION L-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SCA-01

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P 270923Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4930

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 8878

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RP

SUBJECT: LECHOCO CASE

REF: STATE 149776

1. REJECTION OF LECHOCO'S INSANITY PLEA WAS FRONT-PAGE STORY IN AFTERNOON (JUNE 26TH) EXPRESS AND THIS MORNING'S EXPRESS (JUNE 27). ARTICLE BYLINED BY MARIA THERESA MANUEL (WHO USUALLY TRAVELS WITH MRS. MARCOS) REPORTS LECHOCO HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALL CHARGES ON WHICH HE PREVIOUSLY CONVICTED AND THAT MINIMUM SENTENCE WOULD BE FOUR TO FIVE YEARS IN PRISON. ARTICLE SAYS LECHOCO'S LAWYER IS EXPECTED TO APPEAL CASE TO CIRCUIT COURT. STORY CONCLUDES BY NOTING THAT UNTIL TRIAL LECHOCO WORKED AS LAW RESEARCHER AND THAT HIS WIFE AND OLDER CHILDREN ALL HAVE JOBS INCLUDING THE "BOY WHO WAS THE PRETEXT FOR THE EMBASSY SIEGE" WHO WORKS AS RESTAURANT WAITER. SIMILAR ACCOUNT APPEARED IN TIMES JOURNAL.

2. DEPT MAY RECALL THAT MARCOS TOLD TV INTERVIEWER WHO ASKED WHETHER GOP WOULD PRESS CHARGES AGAINST LECHOCO: "IF WE WERE ASKED WHETHER WE WOULD PRESS CHARGES, I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD." WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE, HOWEVER, ON POSSIBLE GOP REACTION TO LECHOCO DEPORTATION (PRESUMABLY TO PHILIPPINES) AT THIS STAGE. IF SUCH COURSE OF ACTION BECAME IMMINENT WOULD WISH TO CONSULT DISCREETLY WITH GOP OFFICIALS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT  
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EXPECT GOP TO BE PLEASED BY SUCH ACTION. LECHOCO AFFAIR

HAS BEEN SOURCE OF CONSIDERABLE EMBARRASSMENT TO GOP ES-  
PECIALLY AS REASONS (OR LACK OF SAME) FOR YOUNG LECHOCO  
BEING PREVENTED FROM EMIGRATING BECAME CLEARER. AT THIS  
STAGE OF THE GAME, GOP CONSIDERS ITSELF WELL-RID OF  
LECHOCO. SHOULD HE BE DEPORTED HERE, PROBABLY WITHOUT  
HIS FAMILY AND WITH UNCERTAIN JOB PROSPECTS, HE COULD  
BECOME POTENTIALLY AS UNSTABLE HERE AS HE WAS IN WASHINGTON  
WHEN ONLY ONE SON WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM.

3. AS GENERAL REACTION, FILIPINOS PROBABLY WOULD INDICATE  
GREAT SURPRISE, IF WE POLLED THEM, AT THE SEVERITY OF  
TREATMENT REFLECTED IN VERDICT. MOREOVER, IT SEEMS PROBABLE  
THAT MANY FILIPINOS WOULD IDENTIFY EASILY WITH LECHOCO'S  
FRUSTRATION AND THE APPARENT MOTIVE FOR HIS ACTION. IT  
FOLLOWS THAT FEW FILIPINOS WOULD FIND LECHOCO'S DEPORTATION  
AN ACT OF COMPASSION.  
PURNELL

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## Message Attributes

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**Concepts:** KIDNAPPING, AMBASSADORS, COURT PROCEEDINGS  
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**TAGS:** PFOR, RP, US, (LECHOCO, NAPOLEON BAYAGA)  
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